SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT FOR A BAND
Case: Husky Rescue

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Tiivistelmä

Toiminnallisen opinnäytetyön tavoitteena oli luoda, tuottaa ja hallinnoida indie rock –yhtye Husky Rescuen sosiaalisen median näkyvyyttä. Husky Rescue on kansainvälisesti menestynyt suomalainen yhtye. Opinnäytetyö pyrkii käsittelemään myös sitä, olisiko taloudellisesti kannattavaa perustaa yritys, joka tarjoaa sosiaalisen median ja digitaalisen markkinoinnin palveluita suomalaisille artisteille.

Internetin kehittyminen staattisten sivustojen verkosta dynaamiseksi viestintäalustaksi on luonut uuden tyyppisen median – sosiaalisen median. Sosiaalisen median nousu on laajentanut tapoja, joilla artistia voidaan markkinoida ja promotoida verkossa. Sosiaalisen median keskeisiä osia olevat sosiaaliset verkkopalvelut ovat yksi Internetin merkittävimpiä kasvualueita ja ovat näin ollen tutkimuksen ja tarkastelun kohteena.

Opinnäytetyö kuvaa projektin aikana sosiaalisissa verkkopalveluissa toteutettuja toimenpiteitä ja tarjoaa myös teoreettisen taustan artistin sosiaalisen median näkyvyyden hallinnoinnille. Toiminnan pääalueina olivat sosiaaliset verkkopalvelut Facebook, Myspace ja Twitter.

Opinnäytetyö on tapaustutkimus yhden artistin sosiaalisen median hallinnoinnista kuvaten sosiaalisen median toimintakenttää ja paljastaen sosiaalisen median hallinnointiin tarvittavat taidot. Opinnäytetyö tarjoaa myös katsauksen sosiaalisen median hallinnoimisen käytännön työhön valaisten tämänkaltaisen projektin haasteita ja ongelmakohtia.

Avainsanat (asiasanat)
Sosiaalinen media, digitaalinen markkinointi, musiikki, artistin promotointi

Muut tiedot
Liitteet: Työpäiväkirja, ruudunkaappaus (Myspace), ruudunkaappus (Facebook Fans Only), ruudunkaappaus (Facebook Main), ruudunkaappaus (Twitter Main), haastattelu (Marko Nyberg).

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Abstract

The goal of the project thesis was to create, produce and manage the social media presence of a Finnish band called Husky Rescue. Husky Rescue is a band that has had moderate international success. The thesis also discusses the feasibility of starting a business that would provide social media and online marketing services to Finnish artists.

The development of the Internet from a network of static websites to a dynamic communications platform has created new types of media – the social media. The rise of social media has expanded the ways an artist can be marketed and promoted online. Social networking, an integral part of social media, is one of the most prominent growth areas of the Internet and it is also one of the key areas of the thesis.

The thesis explains the various social networking activities undertaken during the project on several social networking sites and services. Facebook, Myspace and Twitter were chosen to be the main places of activity. The thesis also provides theoretical background for social media management

The project thesis provides a case study about managing an artist's social media presence. As a conclusion it reveals the various skills needed to function in this role. The thesis also provides a glimpse into the day-to-day management of a social media presence by shedding light on the pitfalls and challenges of such a project.

Keywords Social media, digital marketing, music, artist promotion

Miscellaneous Appendices: Work Diary, Screenshot (Myspace), Screenshot (Facebook Fans Only), Screenshot (Facebook Main), Screenshot (Twitter Main), Interview With Marko Nyberg.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the current business environment an artist or a band has to have an efficient online presence. As the Internet has become almost the de facto medium for music consumption, the traditional ways of marketing are not sufficient in order to create a meaningful relationship between a consumer and musical products. The rise of social media has further changed the marketing environment. Marketing has become a two-way street - no longer is it sufficient for artists and bands to only broadcast their message through mass media. There has to be a two-way discussion between the artist and fans, not forgetting the potential future fans.

Although the Internet has not been a mass medium for a long time yet, it has undergone a great deal of changes. The early Internet consisted of static websites, with content that differed from newspapers only by the way they were distributed. The Internet now, at least from the marketing perspective, is almost completely different. Social media has attracted millions of users through services such as Facebook, Myspace and Twitter. As social media are based on social interactions between users as opposed to the old static websites, they provide a very fruitful platform for marketing.

In this context social media management and marketing for artists is a very interesting subject. The possibilities online are vast compared not only to the traditional media (newspapers, television, etc.) but also to the early Internet. The goal of this thesis was to create a social media presence for a Finnish band. As an additional minor objective I wanted to build insight into whether it would be feasible to start a business around consulting and helping artists with their online marketing.

I chose to work with a Finnish band because I wanted to be able to work in close cooperation with the band, with several face-to-face meetings and phone calls. Although online tools would have enabled me to work with a band from another country, I did not want to further complicate an already complicated task.

Husky Rescue is a Finnish band that has had moderate international success, with albums released both in Europe and USA. The band released a new album *Ship of Light* in February 2010. I was approached by the band's manager to improve the band's social media presence in preparation for this release.

2 OBJECTIVES OF THE REPORT

The key objective of this project thesis was to create and produce a social media presence for the Finnish band Husky Rescue. Social media presence is critical for all bands as it is costless and it gives an artist a direct channel to fans (Mallon, 2010). Social media presence refers to being present and active in the social media. Kaplan and Haenlein defined social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content" (Kaplan, Haenlein, 2009). As social media cannot be defined unambiguously (Lake, 2009), in the scope of this thesis it refers to several different definitions that will be further discussed below.

A minor objective of this project thesis was to gain insight into whether it would be feasible to start a business that would provide social media and online marketing services to Finnish artists. This insight will help graduating students and anyone else who is considering working and starting a business in this field.

3 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

To successfully implement a project such as the one that is the subject of this thesis a strong theoretical background must be established. Even before starting the project it was evident that it was not sufficient to only understand what marketing is. Although it can be argued that general marketing theory provides the basis for any marketing activity (Mathews, 2008), it is necessary to understand the specific requirements of any specific case. In this project thesis, the required theoretical background includes, in addition to general marketing theory, fields and disciplines such as the Internet, social media and the related services and web programming. In addition, it was important to create a solid understanding about who the artist is.

As this thesis is a project thesis, a significant amount of work was put into actual day-to-day work. Due to this, the scope of the theoretical background was limited so as to serve only the needs of the project. As a result, this thesis does not aim to provide an exhaustive study on the topics discussed, e.g. social media, but to contribute to the insight about them in the context of the topic of this thesis.

3.1 Marketing

Marketing has many definitions. According to the American Marketing Association (AMA) marketing is "an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders." (American Marketing Association, 2007). Armstrong, Harker, Kotler and Brennan (2009) give a simpler definition: "marketing is managing profitable customer relationships". McKenna (1991) simplified further by stating that "marketing is everything and everything is marketing".

The definitions above provide a good look into the different definitions for marketing. American Marketing Association's definition (2007) gives a broad definition concentrating on the role and the activities of the organization, whereas the simple definition given by Armstrong et al. (2009) approaches marketing from a goal oriented perspective. McKenna's definition (1991) is almost provocative in its oversimplification.

To understand marketing in the context of the music industry, it is important to further explore the definitions of marketing. Baker (2007) divides music marketing into three elements: a) creating awareness; b) making connections; c) asking for the sale. These three elements provide a good, although a simplified, view on what music marketing is. Music Marketing [dot] com (n.d.) provides further insight by stating that "music marketing is an extension of you and your music".

For this project thesis the definitions by Baker (2007) and Music Marketing [dot] com (n.d.) will be used as the core meanings of marketing. Furthermore, McKenna's "marketing is everything and everything is marketing" (1991) proves to be a strikingly appropriate definition for marketing in the context of this project.

3.2 Internet

The Internet has changed the world as nothing before. Furthermore, "the Internet has changed and transformed marketing and business since the first website went live in 1991" (Chaffey, Ellis-Chadwick, Mayer, Johnston, 2009, p. 3). The Internet is at once a "world-wide broadcasting capability, a mechanism for information dissemination, and a medium for collaboration and interaction between individuals and their computers without regard for geographic location" (Leiner et al., n.d.). Although the Internet is now an almost ubiquitous part of everyday life in almost all the countries of the world, its development actually started in the 1960's in the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), a little known agency of the United States Department of

Defense that is responsible for the development of new technology for use by the military . The first computer network that resembled the underlying technology of today's Internet was called the Advanced Research Projects Agency Network (ARPANET). (DARPA, n.d.)

ARPANET and other computer networks developed at the same time were mainly used by government organizations and big businesses. As several other computer networks were being developed around the world, the idea to connect these networks together made way for what we now view as the Internet. Following the commercialization of these networks by big corporations in the 1980's and the subsequent rise in non-commercial use made computer networks an integral part of human life, at least in the developed countries. (Leiner et al., n.d.)

In other words, from a technological point of view the Internet is a network of computers that can distribute and receive information. However, from the point of view of the consumer and in the scope of this thesis, it is important to understand the various applications that it enables and has enabled for the end user. It is also important to note that the Internet is in "constant evolution" (Internet Society, n.d.) which will cause additional challenges for anyone looking to apply the findings of this thesis. What was applicable during the writing of this thesis might be inapplicable in the future.

The Internet has had a significant impact on the music industry, especially music distribution. It has also brought along a great deal of new opportunities as well as challenges. The Internet provides new channels for marketing and promotion, such as websites and social networks, while also giving rise to challenges such as music piracy and the changes in the revenue model (Sparrow, 2006, p36). While piracy and the changing revenue model of the music industry have been widely discussed in the media, Kusek and Leonhard say that the music industry is in a good shape and that music is being listened to more than ever as a result of new technologies (Kusek & Leonhard, 2005).

3.2.1 Website

The American Web Advisory Council (WAC) defines a web page as "Any computer file, document, or grouping of electronic text which can be addressed by a hypertext link and rendered for a user on his/her computer monitor" (WAC, n.d.). Furthermore, a website is defined as "a collection of Web pages with a home page, managed as a unit" (WAC, n.d.). As of November 2010 there are approximately 250 million websites currently operational (Netcraft, 2010).

A website is the most basic and ubiquitous feature of the Internet - most of the online consumption of media happens through websites. Many other applications on the Internet have been built on top of websites. For example, most social networks, such as Facebook and Myspace, are used by the consumers through websites.

In the context of music marketing it has now become common to refer to an artist's official website as the actual website, which is not a part of another website such as Facebook or Myspace, (Fosco, n.d.). An artist's profile websites on Facebook and Myspace are often referred to respectively as the 'Facebook page' and 'Myspace' (Fosco, n.d.). This terminology is used in this thesis as well.

In the context of this thesis it is important to take a look at typical artist websites. A typical artist website contains a biography, fact sheets, photographs, tour dates, product catalogue, a blog or news section and contact information (Knab & Day, 2007). In addition to these, an artist website can have several other features such as interactive animations, message boards, dynamically updated news content from other services (e.g. Twitter-feeds), and much more. As previously mentioned, the internet is ever-evolving, and new applications and services that can add value and content to a website are published daily.

Although quality is a subjective matter, it is important to take a look at some examples of generally well-liked artist websites in order to understand what works in the online world. The examples were picked from the BT Digital Music Awards Best Official Site Top 20 category results (BT Digital Music Awards, 2010). BT Digital Music Awards is a yearly competition organized by British Telecommunications plc. The Best Official Site Top 20 category winners were chosen by an audience vote.

Example 1.

Muse.mu

The official website for Muse.mu won the first place in the BT Digital Music Awards. The website has a modern look with a landing page filled with content from various sources. Muse.mu website has nine main sections: a) home b)news; c) tour dates; d) media player; e) discography; f)images; g)members; h)forum; i)shop. The landing page consists of various content areas that are filled with the latest content from the different sections of the website. There is also the possibility to sign up for a mailing list and Muse's proprietary social network service.

Example 2.

kylie.com

Kylie Minogue's official website, kylie.com, has a structure similar to that of muse.mu. Kylie.com's content is divided into thirteen sections: a) home; b) news; c) blog; d) press; e) galleries; f) video; g) lyrics; h) discography; i) kylieconnect; j) store; k) tour dates; l) links. The landing page consists of various content areas that show the latest content from the various sections of the website. A notable feature of the kylie.com website is the inclusion of a Twitter-widget - a website application that shows the latest updates from the official Kylie Minogue Twitter account. In addition, there are links to the artist's official profile pages on social network services such as Myspace, Facebook and Youtube.

3.2.2 Social Media

Social media has undoubtedly become a major part of our lives (Gordhamer, 2009). Although it is widely discussed in the media and the academic world, there is no clear definition for it. Many experts and reporters have come up with different definitions but none of them has yet become commonly accepted as the de facto definition for 'social media'. Evans (2008, p.46), for example, defines social media as "participatory online media where news, photos, videos, and podcasts are made public typically accompanied with a voting process to signal items considered 'popular'." This definition concentrates on different types of media that are distributed through social media and on how they are consumed by users. Evans (2008, p.46) further expands the definition by adding that the notion of influence is the basis for social media activity.

In contrast to Evans's definition (2008, p46.) Kaplan and Haenlein defined social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content" (Kaplan, Haenlein, 2009). This definition has two main concepts: web 2.0 and user generated content. Web 2.0 is defined by Nations (n.d.) as a social platform on which the users provide their own content. An encyclopedia definition for user-generated content is "any data or media that is contributed by individual users of a website" (Dictionary.com's 21st Century Lexicon, 2010). Kaplan and Haenlein approached the definition from a technical and ideological point of view.

Mayfield's definition of social media states that social media is a group of new types of media online (Mayfield, 2008). Furthermore, Mayfield presents five characteristics that social media have:

participation, openness, conversation, community and connectedness (Mayfield, 2008). He further divides social media into six usage types: social networks, blogs, wikis, podcasts, forums, content communities and microblogging as illustrated by Figure 1.
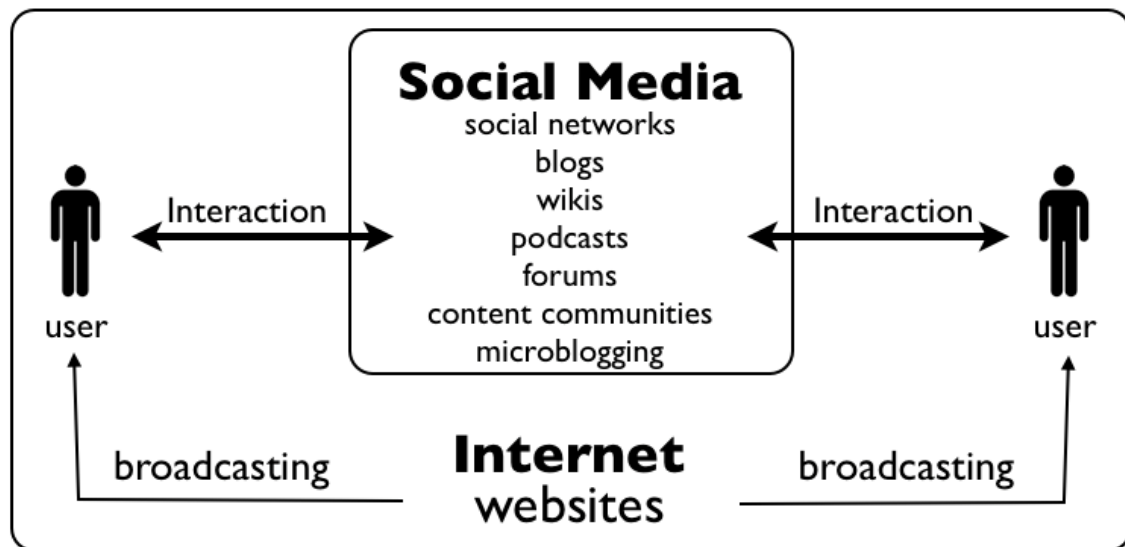

Figure 1. Social media and traditional Internet. Based on Mayfield (2008) and Lacy (2010)

Lacy sums up social media with one word: interaction (Lacy, 2010). This description of social media approaches the subject from the point of view that most users experience in social media - interaction with other people. In a way this description is the most accurate - no social media service would work if there was only one user using the service.

Erkkola discusses the challenge of having many different definitions of social media (Erkkola, 2008). According to Erkkola the term social media has risen from the need of a specific term to distinguish it from the previous developmental phases of the Internet and media (Erkkola, 2008). Through his research Erkkola has come up with a definition of his own:

> *Social media is a technology-related and structural process where individuals and groups are building shared meanings, through peer production and produsage, with help of content, communities and network technologies. Social media is also a post-industrial phenomenon and because of the changes in the production and distribution structures, it has an impact on society, economy and culture.* (Erkkola, 2008, p83.)

In the scope of this thesis Mayfield's (2008) and Lacy's (2010) definitions are the most applicable. Mayfield's definition (2008) sets the operating field for the work (social networks, blogs, microblogging, etc.) while Lacy's definition, interaction (2010), sets the modus operandi.

Although many use the terms social media and social networking interchangeably, they can be separated (Cohen, 2009). Cohen (2009) states that "Social Media can be called a strategy and an outlet for broadcasting, while Social Networking is a tool and a utility for connecting with others". In this thesis, social networking refers to the activity, whereas social media is the medium and operating environment.

Social networking has become one of the most popular activities online. According to Experian Hitwise (2010), social networks surpassed search engines in popularity by becoming the most visited website category in the UK. According to Belleghem (2010), 72% of Internet users are members of at least one social network. This translates to more than 940 million users worldwide (Belleghem, 2010). According to IROResearch (2010) 44% of Finns use social media.

Facebook is the most popular social media service with more than 500 million active users (THAT Agency, 2010). 50 percent of these users sign in daily (THAT Agency, 2010). Other social networks that have a significant number of users include Myspace with 122 million active users and Twitter with 100 million users (THAT Agency, 2010). There are several other social networking services that have millions of users.

Mayfield (2008) divides social media into six usage types. *Social network*, in the context of this thesis, refers to a web-based service that offers a medium through which end-users interact with each other through communication, media sharing, and other activities. The best known example of a social network is the ubiquitous Facebook. *Blog*, or weblog, refers to a frequently posted online journal that readers can comment on (Anderson, Greenspun, Grumet, n.d.). PerezHilton.com is a good example of a typical blog. *Wiki* refers to "a collaborative Web site oriented to providing knowledge in some domain" (Information Management, nd.). Wikipedia is the probably the most famous wiki-based website. *Podcasts* are audio or video files that can be downloaded from the Internet, often similar in content to blogs (Idaho Commission for Libraries, n.d.). *Forum* is an "online discussion site" (vBulletin, n.d.). *Content communities* refer to web services that specialize in the sharing of a certain type of medium, for example video (Mayfield, 2008). Youtube and Flickr are good examples of content communities. *Microblogging* refers to blogging that is characterized by the brevity of the content and that takes place through specialized microblogging services (Mayfield, 2008). Twitter and Tumblr are two prominent examples of microblogging services.

Twitter.com is currently the most popular microblogging service (Mista, 2010). On Twitter.com the service is described as "a real-time information network that connects you to the latest information about what you find interesting" (Twitter Inc., n.d.). Twitter was started in 2006 in the United States by a group of employees of Odeo Inc. in San Francisco (Sagolla, 2009). In only

4 years it has now become the biggest microblogging service with more than 175 million users (Twitter, 2010). According to Twitter (2010), 95 million messages are sent on the service per day.

Microblogging is a form of blogging that is characterized by the brevity of the content. On Twitter the message is limited to 140 characters. Most typically a message on Twitter contains plain text and sometimes a link to a media file or a website. A typical Twitter user posts messages to his/her own Twitter profile, while following other users' messages. The user has to choose whose messages they want to see. This is called *following* on Twitter. A message can be directed at someone by using simple syntax: by entering a '@' character followed by the user name (e.g. @username) in the message field, the message will be directed to that user. Another prominent feature of Twitter is the ability to resend someone else's message. This feature is called *retweeting*. The most typical reason for retweeting is to communicate agreement with and/or support of the original message. (Twitter Inc., n.d.)

There are various applications and websites that can be used to access the Twitter service in addition to the Twitter.com website. There is a multitude of applications for both desktop and mobile environments. The natural suitability of microblogging to the mobile environment has helped Twitter to gain more than four million mobile users as of 2010 (Venturebeat, 2010).

Twitter has become very popular among artists (Lustig, 2010). According to the data compiled by Nijmeh (2010), there are at least 2426 artists using Twitter as of October 2010. Several marketing related activities can be undertaken by using Twitter. Tallmadge (2009) provides a good overview of what an artist can do on Twitter:

- encourage people to visit your other websites
- Use Twitter to meet other artists. There's millions of Twitter users...some of them are bound to be artists like you!
- Use Twitter to announce sneak previews for your products or changes to your website.
- Use Twitter to announce television appearances. And don't forget any "appearances" on radio, podcasts, blogs, magazines, and newspapers.
- Use Twitter to gather feedback about your products. Post a new product and let your customers tell you what they think!
- Use Twitter to communicate with your customers when your website goes down or when you lose your Internet connection.
- Use Twitter as a survey tool. Need to know what people think about something? Throw the question out there and find out!
- Do you have an artist's co-op or Etsy team? Create a Twitter account just for that co-op or team to get your group news out!
- Use Twitter as an information resource for your followers by including links to useful websites and bits of news.
- Use Twitter to do live reporting at a gallery opening, exhibition, or conference.
- Use Twitter to give special offers just for your followers...you might even want to create a special, private Twitter account just for this.

- Use Twitter for inspiration. If you follow interesting people, you'll get a lot of ideas and resources that you've never thought about...you can use Twitter for more than just tooting your own horn!
- Use Twitter to get help. If you have a problem or a question, post a tweet and let your followers come to the rescue.

Lady Gaga is the most popular artist on Twitter and the most popular Twitter user altogether, judging by the number of followers (Twittercounter, 2010). Lady Gaga has over 7 million followers. Other popular Twitter artist/band users include Britney Spears (6.2 million followers), Justin Bieber (5.9 million followers), Taylor Swift (4.6 million followers), Katy Perry (4.5 million followers), Ashley Tisdale (3.7 million followers) and 50 Cent (3.5 million followers). Popular Finnish bands on Twitter include Apocalyptica (7938 followers) and Don Johnson Big Band (5639 followers).

Lady Gaga is a good example of an artist's Twitter profile. The design for the profile page at twitter.com/ladygaga is simple but effective - the background image is a tiled black and white picture of the artist in a dramatic outfit. From a technical point of view having the background image tiled is a good choice as it allows for a similar user experience on displays with different resolutions. Lady Gaga's Twitter profile is updated relatively often, with approximately 6 updates per week. Her updates are very straightforward and personal. For example, on October 23rd 2010 she *tweeted:*

About to do my very first interview for Born This Way, I'm so excited and happy! Have all little monsters in my heart to carry with me xx MM (Twitter, 2010)

This message is very typical for her Twitter page. Most of the messages are written in the same candid and positive tone. Lady Gaga's Twitter messages also contain other content than text - she often links to photos, videos and websites.

A significant milestone was reached in March 2010 when Facebook passed Google as the most visited website in the U.S (Arrington, 2010). Facebook received 7% of all U.S. website visits in March 2010 (Arrington, 2010). This shows the reach that Facebook has - it has both a great deal of users and the users are very active. More than 8% of the world's population is now on Facebook (Barnett, 2010). Facebook has more than 500 million users as of July 2010 (Facebook, 2010). There are 1.8 million Facebook users in Finland as of October 2010 (Facebakers, 2010).

Facebook was founded by Mark Zuckerberg, a Harvard sophomore at the time, and his room mates in February 2004. The service was then called thefacebook.com instead of Facebook. Later on controversy ensued when a group of Harvard seniors accused Zuckerberg of stealing their idea.

After several years the lawsuits and conflicts have now been settled, and Facebook has become a booming business, with a current valuation of approximately 30 billion U.S. dollars (Eldon, 2010).

Facebook is a social networking site that relies on its users to provide the content of the website. A fundamental feature of Facebook is a personal profile page. This profile functions as the entry point for any single user to using Facebook. In order to gain the most out of the service, a significant amount of personal information has to be submitted to the service. This includes, but is not limited to, the name, date of birth, relationship status, names of friends, past and present schools and employees, etc. Pictures and other media files can be submitted as well. Although the user is not required to submit any information or media other than his/her name to the service, the service is designed in a way that makes it the more entertaining the more one shares information. (Facebook, n.d.)

The social networking aspect of Facebook comes to play when people tag each other as friends, an activity often referred to as *friending* (Treadaway, Smith, 2010). By identifying someone as a friend a user allows that person to access his/herdata. The amount of data accessible this way can be adjusted on a friend-by-friend basis through the privacy settings on Facebook. (Facebook, n.d.)

In the scope of this thesis, the Facebook features that are the most significant in addition to personal profiles are the so-called *Pages.* Pages are a feature of the Facebook that allow organizations, companies, bands and other non-person entities to establish a Facebook profile. These differ from personal profiles in several ways. For example, a Page does not have *friends,* but Facebook users can, instead, use a tagging feature called *like* that ads them to a list of people who like that page. The entity that is the owner of the Page, be it a company or a band or something else, can then communicate and interact with these people, who have 'liked' the Page. (Facebook, n.d.)

A Facebook Page has several different features that an artist or a band can use to engage, interact and communicate with its audience. The most important features include: a) the Wall; b) Tabs; c) Discussion boards; d) Video; e) Photos; f) Events; g) Static FBML. The *wall* is an element on a Facebook Page that contains the latest comments from the page administrator and from fans. The content can be text or rich media, such as photos or videos. *Tabs* are a navigational tool in the top part of a Facebook page that a user can use to navigate to the different sections of the Facebook Page. *Discussion boards* is, as the name implies, a section where users can discuss using a traditional message board layout. *Video* is the section where the administrator and fans can upload videos to be shared with the fans of the Page. *Photos* is a similar section for photos. *Events* is a feature of a Facebook Page that can be used to post information about upcoming events, such as

concerts. *Static FBML* refers to a feature that allows custom programmed content to be used on a Facebook page. FBML refers to a web programming language called the Facebook Markup Language. All of the features mentioned above can be customized and administered by the administrator of the Page. (Facebook, 2010)

The most popular artist profile on Facebook is currently of the late Michael Jackson (Heussner, 2010) with 23 million fans as of November 2010 (Facebook, n.d.). The popularity of a Facebook Page can be judged not only by the number of *likes* it has gathered, but by the amount of interaction the fans of the Page have engaged in. The interactions refer to comments and *likes* posted to various content items posted on the Facebook Page by the administrator of the Page. For example, the latest post on the page as of November 7th has received 15,420 *likes* and 1,517 comments in less than 24 hours.

Facebook offers a guide for managing an artist Page on Facebook. The guide offers four suggestions for creating a good experience for fans through a Facebook Page:

- Be personal, not promotional
- Create content worth sharing
- Join the conversation
- Use tools to increase relevance

  (Facebook, 2010)

Although these suggestions have been created for Facebook, they apply everywhere in the social media. They take into consideration the various aspects of social media, such as technology and interactivity.

Figure 2. Michael Jackson's Facebook Page - cropped to show the latest post on November 6 2010.

Myspace is a popular social networking website that is very popular among artists and music fans (Hupfer, Maxson and Williams, 2007). According to Hupfer, Maxson and Williams (2007) "MySpace has grown from a place for bands and musical artists to share their work to a popular online hangout for teenagers and college students to a social and cultural phenomenon that boasts over 100 million profiles and is valued at more than $15 billion". Recently Myspace's membership numbers have been declining, largely due to the rise of new competitors, such as Twitter and Facebook (Smith, 2009).

Recent statistics show that Myspace is the fourth most trafficked social networking website with 95 million unique visitors in August 2010. However, the figures went down by 17% from the same period last year (Efrati, 2010). In comparison, Facebook had 598 million unique visitors in the same time period (Efrati, 2010). As a result of the dwindling popularity, Myspace has recently undergone a major redesign in order to attract more users (Barnett, 2010). Mike Jones, Myspace CEO, stated in November 2010 that "MySpace is a not a social network anymore. It is now a social entertainment destination." (Barnett, 2010).

Myspace has two kinds of profiles – artist profiles and personal profiles. Personal profiles are used by consumers to communicate and share media with other users. Artist profiles are used by bands to promote their music. All profiles are accessed through profile websites that can be customized by the user. The main difference between an artist profile and personal profile is that the artist profile has a music player embedded on the profile website. This player is a very popular way for bands to share music. Similarly to Facebook, people can tag themselves as fans of a band profile. An artist profile can then communicate with personal profiles by sending out news updates, videos and photos through Myspace. (Hupfer, Maxson and Williams, 2007)

3.2.3 Husky Rescue

Husky Rescue is a Finnish band that was formed in 2002 by Marko Nyberg. The band's first album, Country Falls, was released in 2004. The first album had 20 contributing musicians but for touring purposes, Nyberg signed on Reeta-Leena Korhola, Ville Riippa, Anssi Sopanen and Miika Colliander to be the official members of the band. (Hopkin, n.d.).

The band has had moderate success in Europe and USA, playing numerous shows in both regions. Husky Rescue's songs have been featured in television commercials and even television shows. In 2007 the song New Light of Tomorrow was featured in a television ad for the company

Stena Line in the UK. In 2006 the same song was featured in the widely popular television show 'The Sopranos'.

The band's style has been described in many ways. The AllMusic website lists the band's genre as pop/rock (Hopkin, 2010). AllMusic adds further descriptions by listing Husky Rescue under musical styles such as *chamber pop, alternative/indie rock, indie pop and indie electronic*. The Guardian described their latest album Ship of Light as "frosty and dripping with melancholy" (Hann, 2010).

3.2.4 Web Programming

Web programming refers to the practice of creating websites and web services by using a programming language. There are several programming languages that have different features and applications. In the scope of this thesis, the most important programming languages are HTML, CSS and FBML.

Practically all websites are created by using HTML (Hypertext Markup Language). HTML is used to display content in a browser application, such as Firefox or Internet Explorer. HTML provides only the basic functions in a website, such as text formatting and layout – this is why it is often used in combination with other web technologies, such as Flash and Java. Flash and Java are programming languages that can be used to create multimedia and interactive elements in websites. In the context of this thesis, HTML was used to a great extent, as it is an integral part of all the services used. (Wang, 2008, p.463, 497)

CSS (Cascading Style Sheets) is a programming language that adds more control to the presentation of a HTML document. It is used to control how a HTML website is presented in the browser window – more precisely it can control colors, fonts and even the general layout of the website. For this project, CSS, in addition to HTML, was used in the design of the Myspace band profile. (Wang, 2008, p.477)

FBML (Facebook Markup Language) is a programming language that is used to create Facebook applications and customized features. It can be used to create, for example, stand-alone applications that the Facebook users can use through Facebook. It can also be used to customize the content of the existing features, such as Facebook Pages. In the context of this thesis FBML was used to create the *Fans Only!* tab in the Husky Rescue Facebook Page. (Stay, 2008)

4 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

Rather than describe the implementation of the project in a chronological order, as would be logical, I chose to divide the latter part of this section into parts each concentrating on a separate website or web service. This choice was made in order to make this document more useful for anyone looking to find insight and advice into social media management for artists. A work diary can be found in the appendices (appendix 1).

Before the first meeting with the band, I had the idea that my role in this project would be that of a social media strategist. It became clear in the first meeting, that that would not be the case. The band needed a hands-on person working on the day-to-day aspects of social media management. This was mainly because the band is mainly run by Nyberg. The rest of the band members are all working full time elsewhere. Even Nyberg has a great deal of other projects and does not have enough time to take care of all the daily tasks of the band.

After the first meeting I set out to conduct online research about Husky Rescue - mainly about the band's social media presence. I searched out all the existing profiles that had been created either by the band and the record company or by fans. Looking through the sites I immediately noticed a need for a general overhaul of the profiles. Some of the profiles had not been updated for a long time. Furthermore, the upcoming album release demanded the updating of at least the most important profiles.

I presented my findings to Nyberg, and we had a long discussion about how he saw the social media landscape. As we did not have the man power or the budget to take care of many profiles, we decided to concentrate on the ones we thought were the most important. After some deliberation, we came to the conclusion that the official website, Myspace, Facebook and Twitter are the most important channels. Others would not be worked on. This proved to be a good choice later on, as even Myspace alone required a great deal of work. The key factors in establishing the most important channels were the size of the current audience and the size of the potential audience.

As my role was not that of a social media strategist but that of a *general handyman of social media*, I soon realized that I would have to expand my skillset beyond what I had studied at school or when preparing for this project. I had to improve my skills in graphics editing and web programming with FBML, HTML and CSS. These ended up taking a surprisingly big amount of time as I have had minimal formal training and experience in these fields.

4.1 Myspace

As discussed above, Myspace has been the traditional *go-to social network* for bands. Nyberg saw Myspace as the most important channel at the time for Husky Rescue. Although I did not completely agree, I understood the reasoning behind it. The band's Myspace profile had a high number of monthly visitors and song plays. Myspace was also a good place to start our cooperation as we saw it as an easy start.

The first task I set out to do was the redesigning of the Myspace page. Although I had basically no expertise in coding a Myspace page, I wanted to see if it was possible to do it. Naturally, had we had the budget for it and the initial plan was to use an outside professional. However, as part of my goals for this thesis was to understand the reality of working in this field, I decided to accept the challenge and learn the skills needed for creating a custom Myspace page.

After a series of iterations, the final version of the band's Myspace page was ready. The artist and the record company were both very pleased with it. The main design idea behind the new Myspace page (appendix 2) was to have a big video on the top of the page, so that anyone coming to the website would see that first. This is very different from a traditional Myspace page that usually has a narrow banner image on the top. This was a good way of generating views for the band's music videos.

Another task related to Myspace is the uploading of songs to the player. As the song player is the core feature of any artist's Myspace page, it is important that the artist has relevant songs available for listening by the visitors. Although uploading a song to Myspace is a rather trivial task, it can be time consuming because the upload feature on Myspace is very unreliable. Often times I had to upload the same song three times so as to have it show up in the profile. This is why it is good to upload songs in advance and make them public at the right time using the song management settings.

Most of the content that I posted on Myspace was in the form of blogs. The blogs were mainly news about what was happening with Husky Rescue. The blogs were written in cooperation with Nyberg. In addition, tour dates were updated to Myspace on a weekly basis.

4.2. Facebook

Facebook was one of the channels on which we decided to concentrate. The reasoning behind it was that it is too big to be ignored and it can help the band to obtain new fans. The band did not have an official Facebook page before. There was only a fan group that was run by a fan of the band. We decided that we needed to start an official Husky Rescue Page as soon as possible. We ran into some trouble immediately as the logical web address www.facebook.com/huskyrescue was already taken. Rather than waste any energy on trying to claim the address, we decided to use www.facebook.com/huskyrescueofficial instead.

Setting up an artist page on Facebook is a relatively simple process. This can be done through a simple form on Facebook. After filling in the required information, the page is automatically created by Facebook. No programming is required at this stage.

We discussed the tone of voice that would be used on Facebook and agreed that the posts should mostly come from the band and be written in an exciting, positive and genuine tone of voice. As regards to posts on Facebook, my role was that of a facilitator. The band, mostly Nyberg, would send me posts that they wanted to put on Facebook and I would do the actual posting.

Facebook has been designed so that the end user can change the graphical layout only to a small extent. No changes can be made on the basic template of the layout - all customized content has to be in the predefined content areas. All these restrictions make a Facebook Page both easy and challenging to administer. On the one hand, everyone has the same basic layout and tools available, but on the other hand, it is challenging to design a compelling Facebook Page that would stand out from the crowd.

One of the features I created for the Husky Rescue Facebook page was the 'Fans Only' tab (Appendix 3). This tab contains content that can only be seen by a user that has tagged him- or herself as a fan of the band. The programming for this tab was done in FBML.

Another custom tab I created for the band's Facebook page was a 'Reviews From Around the World' tab that contained pictures of reviews from several magazines from around the world. This tab has now been removed from the page, as the server where the pictures were stored went offline. I also changed the profile picture of the Facebook page often to keep the profile looking fresh (Appendix 4). I also aimed at having at least 3-5 posts per week to give people new content to comment and share. This content included videos, photos and news from the band.

When the new Facebook page was launched, it was announced on the band's Myspace and Twitter profiles. In addition, I posted comments about the new official Page to the unofficial Husky Rescue groups on Facebook. This strategy worked as the page soon had more than 2000 fans.

4.3 Twitter

We decided to start using Twitter as many bands were already doing it quite successfully. The actual set up for Twitter is simple - just a simple registration and the Twitter page is generated automatically. Twitter allows only very little customization - the profile image and the background image can be changed.

The logical address for the band, twitter.com/huskyrescue, was already taken so we decided to use twitter.com/huskyrescuehq instead. I set the bands logo as the profile picture and used a detail from the album artwork as the background image (Appendix 5). The goal was to have a unified visual layout on all profile websites.

The tone of voice on Twitter was decided to be the same as on Facebook - exciting, positive and genuine. Twitter was first updated separately with content different from that in Facebook, but we soon moved to a system where all the Twitter updates would be automatically posted to Facebook. The reason behind this was to make the work load smaller for a situation in which the band would have to handle social media management by themselves.

After the Twitter account was set up, I promoted the new profile on the band's Myspace and Facebook pages by posting links to the public Husky Rescue Twitter profile. This gained the band a significant number of followers on Twitter right from the start.

4.4 Website

It was agreed early on that the production of the official Husky Rescue website would not be a part of this project. It was decided that I would have a role in the planning phase but the implementation would be outsourced by Nyberg. The main reason behind this was that I did not have the technical ability to create a standalone website. It was also noted that the actual programming of the website would not support my personal goals for this project.

I discussed the website design on several occasions with Nyberg. We agreed that the band's website should use the latest album's album art as the inspiration for the graphics. We also decided to use content feeds from the band's various social networking websites on the official website. For

example, a Twitter feed from the official Husky Rescue Twitter profile could be used to create a constantly updated news section for the website. We also discussed implementing a feature that would allow people to become Facebook fans of the band without visiting the actual Facebook page. As it was not in the scope of this project, it was decided that Nyberg would outsource the design and production of the website. Due to budgetary restrictions the website was not updated during this project.

5. EVALUATION AND DISCUSSION

In June 2010 the practical part of this project thesis ended. To evaluate the project, both qualitative and quantitative methods were used. However, due to the unavailability of historical data, quantitative analysis could not be performed. There were two reasons for this: firstly, none of the social networking services used provides historical analytical data needed for a quantitative analysis. Secondly, manually recorded quantitative data from the beginning of the project was lost due to a broken hard drive. Consequently, qualitative analysis was used to evaluate the project.

According to Creswell (2002) qualitative research is characterized by, among other things, using the researcher as a key instrument and by the focus on the participant's perspectives. The use of field focused settings as source of data is also a feature of qualitative research (Creswell, 2002). To evaluate the project qualitatively I interviewed the artist, more precisely Marko Nyberg. I also provided my own perspective on the project.

Before starting the project I had the idea that I would be a social media consultant for the band, providing insight and advice on social media issues. After the first meeting with Nyberg, I realized that this was not what the band needed. Instead, the band needed a hands-on type of a person to handle their social media presence.

During the eight months that I worked with the band I gained insight into how an artist's social media presence should be managed. I also learned what skills are required from someone working in this field. The project also revealed how much work there is in the day-to-day managing of an artist's social media presence.

Looking back, there should have been a stricter definition of what was expected from this project. *Social media presence* is a broad term that is understood differently by different people. The lack of defining this term led to some misunderstandings about what was expected from this project. For example, web programming was something I did not think would be included in my

tasks during this project, but I still ended up learning the basics of several web programming languages and programming content for various websites.

Another aspect that surprised me was the amount of work required for the managing of an artist's social media presence. A great deal of time was spent in meetings discussing the details of how the band should communicate and present itself online. The artist understandably had strong views on the content and style of the social networking profiles, and every decision took a considerable amount of time to make. Naturally, this improved along the way but overall, a considerable part of the time spent on this project was spent in planning rather than implementing.

I interviewed Nyberg in August 2010 in order to receive his evaluation and comments on the project and his view on social media. He was generally pleased with the project and felt that he had needed someone to function as a facilitator regarding social media. According to him, it was just what he needed, as he did not have the time to do everything himself. Nyberg added that he would like to continue working in such a manner, where he does contribute but does not have the day-to-day project management responsibilities, so that he can concentrate on creating music. (Nyberg, 2010)

Nyberg also gave his view about social media in the light of the project. When asked about his opinion on Facebook, Nyberg said that personally he did not have any need for it but as an artist he needed help in setting it up. He had a sceptical view about Facebook as a communication platform because "it has not been that active for us". He did add that Facebook seemed to have the more interested fans when compared to the other social networking websites. Nyberg would also be interested in trying out Facebook to sell music straight to the fans. (Nyberg, 2010)

Nyberg has noticed a change in Myspace in the recent years. He said that during the previous album's launch Myspace had more British users and it was thus more relevant for marketing to the UK audience. Now, he adds, most of the visitors seem to come from USA. Nyberg also shared his concern about Twitter and whether Husky Rescue's target audience would be using a service such as this. He added that Twitter is a very strange culture to him, with its "@-signs and programming code". (Nyberg, 2010)

Nyberg seems apprehensive about social media and underlines this point by saying that to him it means more when someone comes up to him after a concert and compliments the band for the performance, than when someone posts a compliment online. He does, however, see the potential of social media and would like to explore social media further. (Nyberg, 2010)

6. CONCLUSION

Managing a social media presence for an artist is an activity that requires a multitude of skills. Not only is it sufficient to understand marketing, but one also has to have a good understanding of the music industry and the online world. In addition, technical skills are required in order to be able to set up and customize profile pages on social networking websites. Outsourcing technical issues is an option available only to those artists who can afford it. In the current music business environment not many artists can.

On the question of whether it would be feasible to start a company that would provide social media services to Finnish artists, no final conclusion can be made on the basis of this thesis. This thesis does show how challenging a field of work it is and provides insight into the various skills that are needed to function in this area. Further research is needed in this area.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Work Diary

Social Media Management for Husky Rescue
Work Diary

September 2009
A colleague of mine at advertising agency W.Steinmann, Konsta Klemetti, the manager of Husky Rescue asked me whether I would be interested in consulting and helping Husky Rescue with social media. There was no specific plan at this stage. Konsta wanted to increase Husky Rescue's presence online, as it was seen as a cost effective way of creating "band awareness" before the upcoming new album. As a naturally curious type, I agreed to meet with the band.

October 2009
I had my first meeting with Marko Nyberg from Husky Rescue. Turns out that he is the primus motor behind Husky Rescue, a fact that I hadn't realized before. We had a long chat for about three hours about our views on music and the industry, social media, and marketing. It was a really good meeting - we hit it off really well. We had similar views on how a band should present itself online, the significance of band websites as opposed to social network profiles and generally how a band should and should not be promoted.

I also started to collect the passwords and admin rights to the various existing profiles and web services used for Husky Rescue. Most of these I got straight from Marko, some I got from Husky Rescue's record company, Catskills Records.

I spent about four working days designing a first version of a new Myspace profile page for the band. Designing was a challenge for me as I do not have a web programming background. I based the design on the graphics created for the album artwork.

We decided to have weekly or at least bi-weekly meetings with Marko for the duration of the project. No duration was really set, but it was agreed to last for the new album's promotional period.

We also discussed what should be on Huskyrescue.net. We decided that for the time being remove everything old from the site and just have a landing page graphic that informed about the upcoming new album.

Month at a glance:
- weekly meetings on strategy
- Myspace development
- huskyrescue.net discussion
- online monitoring for mentions about the band

November 2009

We set up a new Facebook page in cooperation with the band's record company. Husky Rescue had not previously had an official Facebook presence. There existed a couple unofficial Facebook Groups that were not run by the band. The address Facebook.com/huskyrescue was already in use by some private person, and according to Facebook's terms of use it would be very hard to be able to claim ownership to a reserved address. So we decided to go with facebook.com/huskyrescueofficial

As the new Facebook Page was launched we posted comments on the unofficial groups promoting the official Page. We talked about maybe asking the unofficial groups to be closed, but decided against it.
We also set up a Youtube account for the band and uploaded a new album teaser created by Marko. I edited the layout and graphics on the Youtube profile page based on the album artwork.

As a sideproject I created a Myspace profile for Marko's side project, Marko Nyberg & Uskolliset Ystävät, a band formed to create a movie soundtrack album for the Finnish film Väärät Juuret. Month at a glance:

- Myspace development
- weekly meetings
- Facebook design
- Facebook updates
- online monitoring for mentions about the band

December 2009

December continued as usual. As the album's release date was coming closer, Marko was busier and busier. The band was featured on the Finnish website Irc-Galleria, in a Christmas Calendar promotion. I posted a link to this on the official Facebook page as well through my own Twitter accounts. I redesigned Myspace to have a big embedded Youtube-video on top. This kind of a solution was featured on many band Myspace pages and us both, me and Marko, liked the idea. It was a lot of work, as the customizations I had previously made, conflicted with some of the new code I was bringing in. After about of 30 hours of work, the new Myspace page was up and running. I also did some layout updates to the Youtube page. Uploaded the new song, first single from the upcoming album, Sound of Love to Myspace!

Month at a glance:
- weekly meetings/phone calls
- Facebook updates
- Facebook design
- Myspace Development
- Youtube layout updates
- Myspace blogs

January 2010
The release date was getting close - January 26 in Finland and February 2 for the rest of the world. This month I created the Husky Rescue Twitter page. I also discussed with Marko how and what kind of content should be posted on Twitter. The day-to-day work consisted of Facebook updates.

I created a new tab on the Facebook page called 'Fans Only!' , that contained an exclusive video of the band shot at an in-store appearance. The remarkable thing about this tab is that the content can only be viewed by Facebook users who are fans of the Husky Rescue page. This is a very good way of getting new fans. This feature required me to learn some FBML (Facebook Markup Language), a programming language that is used to create custom content on Facebook. We got a good number of comments and 'likes' on Facebook this month!

Month at a glance:
- weekly meetings/phone calls
- Facebook updates
- Facebook design
- Twitter updates
- Myspace blogs

February
The album had now been released. To collect and share all the album reviews, I created a tab on Facebook to share scans of them with fans. This again required FBML so I had to spend time on that. All in all, a busy month with almost daily updates to Twitter and/or Facebook. Had to do some tweaks to Myspace as there were some glitches with the graphics. Good amount of comments and likes on Facebook!

I also set up a system to automatically post all Twitter post to Facebook as well. Surprisingly difficult as the two first applications I tried, did not work. Smart Twitter was the name of the application that worked.

- weekly meetings/phone calls
- Facebook updates
- Facebook design
- Twitter updates

March
Things quieting down as the album has been out now for a month. Less practical work than before. Edited Myspace a bit. Had long talks with Marko about what can still be done with online marketing. It was time for me to start handing over the responsibilities to the day-to-day activities.

We had long talks with Marko how we thought the project had gone. We were quite happy with what we had done, but we both saw space for improvement. Of course, we agreed that for the price (0 euros) I had done a pretty good job. It had been a learning experience for us both.

- Facebook updates
- Facebook design
- Twitter updates

April
At this stage my active role was decreasing and Marko's increasing. I still talked with Marko and consulted him on Twitter and Facebook strategies, as in what to post and what not to post.

May
Basically the same as previous month. We still had a chat here and there, but I had no day-to-day responsibilities. I still did some bug fixing on Facebook (graphical glitches in the custom content) but mostly just consulting Marko.

June
As the album had been out already for four months it was a good time for me to close the project from my side. There was still one more practical task. I had to edit Myspace again, to replace the video on the top with a new one. It wasn't as simple as it sounds, as the different aspect ratio of the video caused some of the previous layout to not cooperate. We had a debriefing discussion with Marko, that I recorded to include it in my thesis.

Appendix 2 – Screenshot – Myspace Main

Screenshot of the Husky Rescue Myspace page at myspace.com/huskyrescue, retrieved on November 5, 2010.

Appendix 3 – Screenshot – Facebook – Fans only tab

Screenshot of the Husky Rescue Facebook page at facebook.com/huskyrescueofficial, with the 'Fans Only' tab opened, retrieved on November 5, 2010.

Appendix 4 – Screenshot – Facebook - Main

Screenshot of the Husky Rescue Facebook page at facebook.com/huskyrescueofficial, retrieved on November 5, 2010.

Appendix 5 – Screenshot – Twitter Main

Screenshot of the Husky Rescue Twitter page at Twitter.com/huskyrescuehq, retrieved on November 5, 2010

Appendix 6 – Interview Transcript

Transcript of an interview with Marko Nyberg on August 20, 2010.

Sampo: Koetko sä että digimarkkinointi, minkä netti on mahdollistanut, onko se erilaista entisaikaan verrattuna, eli vanhaan markkinointiin?

Marko: Mun mielestä se on ollut sillä lailla erilaista että mun on ollut itse vaikeampi hahmottaa sitä. Ilmeisestihän se on sillä tavalla samanlaista että ihmiset on siellä vastassa. Mutta jotenkin se on mahdollistanut sen että on paljon enemmän, tehdään enemmän kontakteja jotka eivät tarkoita mitään. Entisaikaan se että on vaikka soittanut jollekin se on ollut varmempaa kun siellä langanpäässä on ollut joku.

S: Ymmärrän joo.

S: Mites ennen tätä vuotta kuka teillä on tehnyt nettipuolen hommia? Onko se ollut levy-yhtiö, ei kukaan vai…

M: No se on ollut suorastaan sillee niinku hakusessa että tavallaan sitä ei oo mitenkään järjestelmällisesti tehty.

S:Ok

M: Tavallaan sen on tehnyt se joka… se on hirveän jäsentymättömästi

S: Eli tavallaan kukaan ei oo ottanut selkeää vetovastuuta

M: Joo

S: Onko se ollut resurssikysymys vai se että kukaan ei osaa?

M: Mulle on paljastunut se että tässä meidän ketjussa tuolla levy-yhtiöpuolella on puuttunut ihan selkeästi se tarttuminen niiden asioiden hoitamiseen. Se on ollut epäorganisoitunutta. Tavallaan se miksi en itse ole pystynyt hoitamaan sitä on se että ei vaan yksinkertaisesti oo resurssit riittänyt. Kun on tehnyt nää biisit ja niinku pyörittänyt sitä tietynlaista peruspalettia, kun me ollaan keikkaileva bändi niin pelkästään niiden asioiden hoitaminen. Ei ole ollut ajallisesti mahdollista kun on ollut ikään kuin oma bisnes pyöritettävänä, joka mahdollistaa musiikin tekemisen.

S: Sanoisitko niin että jos bändi olisi sun päätoimeentulonlähde niin olisiko sulla silloin aikaa?

M: En, tekisin enemmän musiikkia.

S: Eli sä toivoisit että levy-yhtiöllä olisi edelleen se rooli että ne hoitaisi nämä. Eli että levy-yhtiöartisti olisi sama kuin ennen, eli bändi tekee musiikin ja levy-yhtiö hoitaa muun.

M: Joo kyl mä näin toivoisin todellakin.

S: Toi on hyvä pointti, aika harva on tuota nostanut esiin. Se on varmaan levy-yhtiöiden rahapulasta johtuvaa se, et ne haluu tunkea kaiken mahdollisen artistille.

M: Niin niin, todellakin on

S: Mites tietotaito, onko sulla tavallaan, koetko että bändillä pitäisi olla nykyään tietotaitoa, tai toisaalta äskenhän sä sanoit että levy-yhtiön pitäisi noi hoitaa.

M: No toisaalta toi sosiaalisen median luonne on sellainen, että mitä henkilökohtaisempaa, niin sen parempi. Mä uskon että siihen pystyisi niin, että jos jollain olisi vetovastuu siitä, niin sen voisi hoitaa henkilökohtaisestikin. Mutta jos se on kokonaan mun vastuulla pyörittää niitä useammassa paikassa niin se on loppujen lopuksi iso paletti.

S: Eli sä tarvitsisit tavallaan semmoisen fasilitaattorin, helpottajan

M: Nimenomaan. Tavallaan se mikä meidän suhde on ollutkin. Tavallaan semmonen on ollut kiinnostava lähtökohta ja semmosena mä sen haluaisin viedä eteenpäin. Tavallaan että jollekin mä pystyisin delegoimaan sen asian, joskin tietyllä tavalla silloin kun se joku ottaa sen vastuun että tietyt asiat tapahtuu ja huolehtii että ne tapahtuvat ajallaan, niin että se on aktiivinen kenttä. -- Kyl mä pystyisin oman kontribuution siihen antamaan. Mut jos se on pelkästään niinku että "tehkää jotain" … Niin se on kaiken muun ohela se on ollut itselle ihan täysin mahdoton asia.

S: Eli sä periaatteessa peräänkuulutat vastuuhenkilöitä ja suunnitelmallisuutta.

M: Joo.

S: Mikä artistinäkökulmasta on sun käsitys Facebookista? Kun sulla itsellä ei ole voimakasta sosiaalisen median taustaa?

M: Mähän edustan ihan silleen erikoisuutta siinä mielessä että mä en koe itse henkilökohtaisesti minkäänlaista tarvetta, en oo kokenut tarvetta sellaseen. Artistina mä taas tarvitsen enemmän apua siinä, ehkä jopa ulkopuolelta tulevaa suunnittelua enemmän.

S: Mikä sun fills on Husky Rescuesta Facebookissa? Mikä sen kanavan merkitys on?

M: Se mitä mä olen seurannut niin siellä on loppujen lopuksi, sinä aikana kun se on ollut olemassa, kun luotiin se virallinen sivu, niin siellä on ollut paljon kävijöitä, faneja. Mut se että millanen tiedotuskanava se on ollut, niin mä olen sitä vähän epäillyt. Mä en tiedä onko se meille ollut mikään aktiivinen juttu.

S: Auttaisiko tuohon epäilyyn että sä saisit siitä analytiikkaa ja raporttia mitä siellä tapahtuu, vaikka tässähän pitää muistaa että siellähän ei mitään myydä, edelleenkin se on vaan niin että joku klikkaa "like" , merkkaako se sulle tavallaan sit oikeesti jotain?

S: Onko se yhteisöllisyyttä että joku ostaa levyn?

M: Eihän se todellakaan oo. Kiinnostavinta olisi tietää kuka on downloadannut sen levyn. Miten paljon se on oikeasti vaikuttanut. Olikos se joku Raptori tai joku joka julkaisi levyn ja kaverini kertoi että sitä on downloadattu ainakin 40000 kertaa, ihan pienen ajan sisällä.

S: Eli sua edelleen kiinnostaa se todellinen musiikinkulutus eikä se että mitä tavallaan teidän brändin ympärillä tapahtuu.

M: Mä oon murrosvaiheessa, että tavallaan niinkuin nyt kun olen vapautunut diileistä ja levysopimus ja kustannussopimus ovat umpeutuneet, niin mä nyt haluaisin itse asiassa toden teolla repästä sitä kokonaisuutta koska ei ole mitään muuta mahdollisuutta. Toi on menetetty toi levymyynti. Eli se tulee olemaan se omakin tulevaisuus että rakentaa sitä kokonaisuutta mahdollisimman jäntevästi.

S: Näitä on näitä palveluita, Facebook, Myspace ja Twitter, kun sä et ole sosiaalisen median konkari, niin koetko onko ne palvelut samanarvoisia, vai nouseeko esiin esim. Myspace perinteikkäänä palveluna.

M: No Myspacessa mä oon huomannut että suurin osa kävijöistä on Jenkkejä, et en tiedä silleen onko sillä Englannissa tapahtuvalle markkinoinnille hirveästi merkitystä. Ainakaan nyt niinkuin viimeisten parin vuoden aikana. Saattoi olla enemmän 2007 kun julkaistiin edellinen albumi. Se oli paljon aktiivisempi silloin, ja oli paljon esim. brittejä. Tuntuu että sen rooli on muuttunut ihan hirveästi Facebookin myötä. Twitteristä en oo ollenkaan varma koska se on tavallaaan semmonen, se mitä mä olen seurannut. Se oli aluksi hyvin erilainen kuin se nyt on. Vaikka mä en paljoa seuraa, että tää on puhtaasti fiilis, mutta se on mulle hirveän vieras kulttuuri että tulee paljon miukumaukuja ja koodia, et mä en tiedä onko esim. meidän kohderyhmä loppujenlopuksi sen tyyppistä väkeä joka elää semmosessa maailmassa.

S: Ja tämäkin pitäisi jonkun asiantuntijan kertoa teille, ei se ole bändin asia selvittää.

M: Ei ole joo. Tässä on just se suurempi dilemma että mikä edellä musiikki leviää nykypäivänä. Itse uskon siihen että musiikki ruokkii musiikin diggailua. Mutta toisaalta onhan sitten osoituksia että sosiaalinen media on ruokkinut joidenkin asioiden diggailua.

S: Teillä on nyt Twitterissä parisataa seuraajaa. Jos sä joutuisit käyttämään siihen kymmenen minuuttia päivässä, niin kokisitko että se olisi järkevää ajankäyttöä?

M: En mä nyt, mä en usko että se on niin organisoitunut fanipohja. Kun taas esim. Facebook on paljon jäsentyneempi tietyllä tavalla, musta se tuntuu että se on enemmän, että siellä on enemmän semmosia jotka on oikeasti kiinnostuneita. Saatan olla täysin väärässäkin mutta tämmönen fiilis mulla on.

S: Mites Facebook, teillä on faneja noin 3000. Koetko että sä voisit ansaita sen verran että bändin toiminta olisi järkevää, pelkästään Facebook fanien kautta, jos myyt niille musiikkia suoraan?

M: Tämä on sellainen asia, mikä on tulossa, mä haluaisin tehdä niin että kun me tehdään seuraavat biisit niin me tehdään jonkinlainen digijulkaisu siitä ja oheisjuttuja, varsinkin kun on vapautumassa siitä ettei tarvitse neuvotella levy-yhtiön kanssa enää siitä minkälaisia nämä kokonaisuudet on ja millaisia ne esteettiset paketi on, niin toisaalta mä olen sen verran vanhanaikainen että mä haluaisin tehdä omasta mielestäni siistejä paketteja, ihan siis fyysisiä paketteja. Mutta kyllä mä sen haluaisin testata että löytyykö sieltä mahdollista ostajakuntaa.

S: Mitä mieltä sä olet siitä että ihmiset sijoittavat bändin tulevaan levyyn?

M: Se on mun mielestä tosi kiinnostavaa, en tiedä onko se todella toiminut.

S: Muutamalla on, mutta ei kaikilla

M: Mä en tiedä onko se niin hyvä ajatus, mutta mä olen kiinnostunut siitä että jos tehdään jotain oikeasti konkreettista, että sen saisi jotain foorumia pitkin vietyä perille.

S: Saako bändi enemmän palautetta nykyään kuin esim. 5-6 vuotta sitten ennen sosiaalista mediaa? Koetko että fanit kertovat teille enemmän asioita, mistä biiseistä ne tykkää jne.? Vai seuraatko tuota puolta?

M: En mä hirveän aktiivisesti ole seurannut, mulle tärkeämpää on se että kun oltiin Flow-festivaaleilla soittamassa niin yllättävän moni tyyppi sen keikan jälkeen tuli silleen että "tää on paras keikka mikä tääl oli". Niin se on paljon konkreettisempi kun ollaan soittamassa livenä. Tai esim. Jenkeissä jengi on ihan erilaista, mä ymmärrän sen miten siellä rakennetaan, et siellä pitäisi kiertää saadakseen sen suosion. Mä en oikein usko että esim. se toimii joka paikassa, että netissä on hirveän vahva, koska se ei välttämättä korreloi todellisuuden kanssa. -- Me ollaan vieläkin murrosvaiheessa. Pitäisi pystyä hahmottamaan ne jotka diggaa. Mullahan tähän on liittynyt vahvasti se ammatillinen puoli, että Husky Rescue on mulle myös käyntikortti, kaupallisen työn tekemiseen, jolloin taas on todella tärkeää että saatiin They Are Coming -video Creativeonline.comissa, joka on mainosalan saitti, jota seurataan jenkeissä. Sitä kautta on tullut monta yhteydenottoa, tosin ne ei oo johtanut vielä mihinkään kaupalliseen. Mutta se luo silti tietynlaista profiilia.--

S: Muutama talouskysymys, ei mitään yksityiskohtia, enemmän mielipidekysymyksiä. Jos ajatellaan, että Husky Rescue on toiminut omana taloudellisena yksikkönään, jolla on tuloja ja menoja. Ja te olisitte ottaneet käyttöön sosiaalisen median konsultin, joka auttaisi sua ja kertoo että mitä pitää tehdä ja lasketaan sille vaikka tämmönen tunti päivässä, konsulttipalkkiot liikkuu tuolla alalla jossain minimi 25e/h, jos siitä laskee 400e kuukaudessa, niin olisiko teillä ollut mitään järkeä maksaa 400e kuukaudessa tavallaan tän levysyklin ajan?

M: Mä en tiedä. Toi on kiinnostavaa siinä valossa paljon mä on pistänyt keikkoihin, miten saa plöräytettyä tonnin poikineen. Kun nyt käytiin keikalla niin tuli 400 puntaa lisämaksua excess luggagesta, ja näitä tulee koko ajan näitä summia, live vaatii häkellyttäviä summia. Olisi ollut todella kiinnostavaa vaikka pistää koko se raha mikä on pistetty liveen, niin markkinointiin. Ei olisi tehnyt yhtään keikkaa vaan promonnut sitä levyä hemmetisti, koko rahalla. Olisi voinut olla järkevämpää.

S: Eli toi summa ei kuulosta pahalta?

M: Se kuulostaa tietyllä tavalla pahalta, mutta kaikki on hemmetin suhteellista. Mä en tiedä pystyisinkö mä itse maksamaan sitä mutta..

S: Joo se oli ihan heitto se summa.

M: Joo.

S: Koetko että netti on auttanut teitä kansainvälistymään, onko se yksi hyödyistä, onko teillä enemmän kansainvälisiä faneja nyt kun olette enemmän netissä? Onko tullut kauempaa yhteydenottoja tai muuta?

M: Mä en tiedä, koska tässä meidän päässä me ei olla tarpeeksi aktiivisia, me ei olla vastailtu siihen jos joku ottaa yhteyttä. Pitäisi olla aktiivinen tässä päässä. Sinänsä, en osaa vastata.

S: Onko nykyään helpompaa nimenomaan suomalaisella bändillä, meillä on netti jossa voi levittää

ilosanomaa kaikille ja koetko että se on enemmän mahdollisuus vai uhka koska te nyt kilpailette miljoonien muiden bändien kanssa ketkä tulevat jostain etelä-Kiinasta ja laulaa…

M: Mä en tiedä onko se uhka, mutta tänä päivänä on paljon vaikeampaa kun on enemmän kilpailua. Ei toi netti tee millään tavalla autuaaksi, itse uskon siihen että jos tekee jotain globaalia keskimääräisyyttä parempaa materiaalia, niin silloin on mahdollisuudet. Jos on oikeasti potentiaalia niin silloin netti on hyvä väline. Mutta tuohon massaan voi hukkua hemmetin helposti.